



SEAPORT

NORTH CENTRAL IDAHO: CLEARWATER, IDAHO, LATAH, LEWIS, & NEZ PERCE COUNTIES

LABOR FORCE AND EMPLOYMENT

Seaport's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for January 2002 increased to 4.6 percent from December's rate of 4.4 percent, as shown in Seaport Table 1. In January 2001, the rate was 4.3 percent. Total employment in January decreased by 170 jobs pushing employment in Nez Perce and Asotin Counties below the 2001 monthly average of 33,047. Two situations that usually contribute to decreased employment in January are reductions in staff after the holiday season and the slowdown of outdoor work because of winter weather. The *Civilian Labor Force*, which is the total of those employed and unemployed, decreased by 90. This decrease suggests that, at least in January, the labor force and the economy tightened.

In January, Seaport's *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* decreased by 510 from December 2001 and decreased 470 from January 2001. The decrease from December was expected and follows trends for December to January data. The decrease from January of last year continues a trend of decreasing employment that started in the first quarter of 2001. Usually, in the situation of monthly decreases, an industry or two can be pinpointed as the cause. However, in this case all industries decreased suggesting a market decrease. With employment diminishing in neighboring communities, the Lewiston/Clarkston market is feeling the pinch.

SPECIAL TOPIC

Labor Force

In the January 2002 issue of this newsletter we analyzed labor force data for 2001 and 2000. At the time of publication we projected 2001 data. Since then we've finalized data for 2001, and it is included on the FYI Table 3 on page 24. A short updated analysis by county is included below.

Clearwater County: The *Civilian Labor Force* decreased in 2001, again. The closure of the Jaype Mill in Pierce and the

Seaport Table 1: Labor Force & Employment
Nez Perce County, Idaho, and Asotin County, Washington

	Jan 2002*	Dec 2001	Jan 2001	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
Seasonally Adjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	34,340	34,430	34,650	-0.3	-0.9
Unemployment	1,580	1,500	1,490	5.3	6.0
% of Labor Force Unemployed	4.6	4.4	4.3	0.2	-0.3
Total Employment	32,760	32,930	33,160	-0.5	-1.2
Unadjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	34,460	34,510	34,790	-0.1	-0.9
Unemployment	1,990	1,560	1,940	27.6	2.6
% of Labor Force Unemployed	5.8	4.5	5.6	1.3	-0.2
Total Employment	32,470	32,950	32,850	-1.5	-1.2
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs**	24,900	25,410	25,370	-2.0	-1.9
Goods-Producing Industries	4,940	5,010	5,030	-1.4	-1.8
Mining & Construction	1,190	1,260	1,150	-5.6	3.5
Manufacturing	3,750	3,750	3,880	0.0	-3.4
Food Processing	70	70	100	0.0	-30.0
Lumber & Wood Products	700	690	720	1.4	-2.8
Paper Products	1,690	1,700	1,720	-0.6	-1.7
All Other Manufacturing	1,290	1,290	1,340	0.0	-3.7
Service-Producing Industries	19,960	20,400	20,340	-2.2	-1.9
Transportation	1,380	1,360	1,400	1.5	-1.4
Communications & Utilities	270	270	300	0.0	-10.0
Wholesale Trade	900	940	940	-4.3	-4.3
Retail Trade	4,730	4,870	4,970	-2.9	-4.8
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	1,380	1,390	1,400	-0.7	-1.4
Services	6,380	6,390	6,490	-0.2	-1.7
Government Administration	2,720	2,700	2,560	0.7	6.3
Government Education	2,200	2,480	2,280	-11.3	-3.5
*Preliminary Estimate					
**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month					

elimination of 225 high paying jobs produced the highest unemployment rate in the state. Unfortunately, this is the second year that Clearwater County has held that distinction.

Idaho County: Total employment increased in 2001, by 165, from 2000. Idaho County's economy has lost over 280 jobs from the 1994 record of 5,941. In addition to losses in *Lumber Manufacturing*, jobs in *Government* decreased because of cutbacks at the U.S. Forest Service. In *Agriculture*, a major industry, the number of jobs is just one-third of what it was 20 years ago.

Latah County: Latah County has one of the lowest unemployment rates in Idaho at 3.3 percent. Employment peaked at 15,707 in 1995 because of growth in *Trade* and *Services*. However, since 1995, employment has decreased 9.2 percent. A significant economic indicator for Latah County is the size of the student population at the University of Idaho. Student enrollment is expected to increase through the year 2002, but state budget concerns may decrease employment at the U of I in 2002.

Lewis County: Total employment in 2001 increased from 2000, but by only 43 jobs. Employment peaked in 1996 at 1,534 because of increases in *Construction*. *Construction* increased because low land prices allowed people to build houses in Lewis County and commute to work in Lewiston. However, since 1996, employment has decreased 9.0 percent.

Nez Perce & Asotin Counties (Seaport): In Nez Perce and Asotin Counties, the *Civilian Labor Force* increased slightly in 2001. Total employment increased 298, which decreased the unemployment rate in 2001 to 4.2 percent.

AREA DEVELOPMENTS

Idaho & Lewis County

- Best Western Salmon Rapids Lodge recently received the Best Western Chairman's Award. This is the hotel chain's highest honor for outstanding quality standards. The Chairman's Award recognizes Best Western International hotels with a cleanliness and inspection score of 1,000 out of a possible 1,000. Hotels also must meet Best Western's requirements for design and high customer service scores to qualify for the award. Located at the confluence of the Little Salmon and Salmon Rivers on U.S. 95 near Riggins, the hotel opened in May 2000. The hotel has 55 rooms, a large indoor pool, an outdoor spa, and two-story lobby.
- Idaho Sewing for Sports, Inc., located near Grangeville, gained national recognition as a supplier for the 2002 Winter Olympic Games. The company manufactured safety pads used along the outer perimeter of the ice for the long track and short track speed skating, as well as padding below bleachers and near stairs. In addition, Idaho Sewing padded the benches where the skaters sit to put on their skates and the padding at the finish areas of a variety of ski and snowboarding venues.
- Clark's Cabin, operated by Susan and Bob Jesse of Fenn, supplied several hundred bags of their hand-made kettle corn for distribution at the Olympic Winter Games in Salt Lake City. Through an arrangement with the Idaho Department of Agriculture, the product was included in a media package that was given to 200 top media personnel from the U.S. and around the world. "We are very proud to be able to represent the city of Grangeville, Idaho County and the State of Idaho at the 2002 Winter Olympics," Bob said. He added, "With the upcoming Lewis-Clark Bicentennial now less than a year away, we're hoping to get this part of the trail exposed as early as possible."

Clearwater

- The High Country Inn opened in February near Orofino. Patterned after a Northwest Lodge, the Inn has a large teaching and professional kitchen, a great room with a stone fireplace, and two sitting areas. The fine sitting room is decorated with tapestry, velour and leather; the rustic sitting room features peeled log rockers, glider, chairs, and half-log benches. Between the

sitting areas is the dining area. The new Inn has space to accommodate weddings and reunions, with indoor capacity for receptions of about 75 people and outdoor space on the deck and grounds for another 50 or more.

Latah County

- The University of Idaho's signature musical event, the Lionel Hampton Jazz Festival, brings in more than \$4 million to the regional economy annually, says a university study recently released. The annual event took place February 20-23. "Ticket sales were figured in, but that is not where the big impact comes from," said Steven Peterson of the Center for Business Development and Entrepreneurship in the UI College of Business and Economics. The study includes the impacts of the festival on Latah, Whitman, Asotin and Nez Perce Counties. The 18,000 students and 2,000 others visiting Moscow and spending their money in local shops, restaurants, and hotels are where the \$1 million per day comes from, Peterson said. "During festival week, there are virtually no lodgings available from Colfax to Clarkston, and every appropriate space on campus and in the community is used for concerts, competitions, workshops, food services, and related hospitality." The study determined festival-related spending was \$4.09 million. The festival also is responsible for the creation of 125 jobs and generates \$1.6 million in earnings for regional employees annually, the study claims. "We did not include local spending in that," Peterson said. "We only counted new money. The figures are conservative."

Nez Perce and Asotin (WA) Counties

- One of the largest cruise lines stopping in the Lewiston-Clarkston Valley will debut a new vessel in 2003, doubling the number of passengers it brings to the area. American West Steamboat Co. will begin building the Empress of the North in the first half of 2002. The announcement comes at a time when American West Steamboat Co.'s chief competitor, American Classic Voyages, announced in the fall it was voluntarily reorganizing under Chapter 11 bankruptcy. Both company's boats brought in an estimated \$2.6 million in 2001 to the Lewiston-Clarkston Valley for jet boat trips, fuel, laundry, utilities, and docking. American Classic Voyages had been operating the 160-passenger Columbia Queen since 2000 on a route similar to that of the Queen of the West. The last time it docked in Clarkston was on October 17. The Empress of the North will make between 20 and 25 stops in Clarkston in the spring, fall, and winter. The trips will originate in Portland. It will spend the summer based in Seattle, plying the waters of the Inside Passage of Canada and Alaska.

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